

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 IO-10 NIC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, GR

SUBJ: "MILD CLIMATE" OF MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS PREVAILS

REF: ATHENS 1508

1. SUMMARY. IN THE FINAL DAYS BEFORE MARCH 30 MUNICIPAL/VILLAGE ELECTIONS THROUGHOUT GREECE, LARGELY NON-PARTISAN AND LOW PROFILE CAMPAIGNING CONTINUES. THE GOG HAS ANNOUNCED ITSELF PLEASED ON WHOLE WITH QUIET CAMPAIGN, AND OPPOSITION HAS SAID VERY LITTLE. IN VILLAGES CAMPAIGNING IS REACHING SOMETIMES INTENSE LEVELS BASED PRIMARILY ON PERSONALITY AND PERSONAL ALIGNMENTS. PRE-JUNTA MAYOR OF ATHENS, GEORGE PLYTAS, CONTINUES TO LOOK LIKE BEST BET TO WIN IN CAPITAL. END SUMMARY.

2. CARAMANLIS CONFERRED WITH MININTERIOR STEFANOPOULOS ON MARCH 25 AND LATTER TOLD PM THAT "REPORTS FROM ALL PARTS OF GREECE SHOW THAT THE PRE-ELECTORAL CLIMATE IS MILD." STEFANOPOULOS LATER TOLD PRESS THAT GOG MEASURES UNDERLINING IMPORTANCE OF NON-PARTISAN LOCAL ELECTIONS HAD BEEN SOUND AND WERE PROVING EFFECTIVE. HE REGRETTED, HOWEVER, THAT CERTAIN POLITICAL ALIGNMENTS WERE IN SOME AREAS SUBJECTING THE ELECTORATE TO THEIR PARTISAN INTERESTS. PRO-LEFT/PASOK

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ATHINAIKI TOLD POLITICAL PIQUE WITH MINISTER'S

COMMENTS IN MARCH 26 EDITORIAL, ASSERTING IT WAS GOG WHICH WAS MAKING ELECTIONS PARTISAN BY CONTINUALLY PROPAGANDIZING PEOPLE TO VOTE AGAINST CANDIDATES OF ANY ALIGNMENTS.

3. THE ALIGNMENTS ARE, IN FACT, AT THIS LATE STATE IN CAMPAIGN STILL DIFFICULT TO IDENTIFY. AMONG THE POLITICAL PARTIES, RIZOSPASTIS FOR KKE/EXTERIOR AND AVGHI FOR EDA PUBLISHED NAMES OF ABOUT THIRTY MAYORALTY CANDIDATES WHOM TWO MAIN LEFTIST GROUPS RESPECTIVELY ENDORSE IN MARCH 26 ISSUES. OTHER PAPERS HAVE ONLY ENDORSED HANDFUL OF CANDIDATES NATIONWIDE OR REMAINED MUTE ON PARTICULAR NAMES. COMPARISO OF PREFERENCES BY TWO LEFTIST GROUPS SHOWS THAT ONLY ELEVEN OF INITIAL THIRTY ENDORSEMENTS COINCIDE. PARADOXICALLY, TWO OF THE CANDIDATES RECEIVING THE JOINT LEFTIST BLESSING ARE WELL-KNOWN RIGHTWINGERS. WE INFER FROM THIS THAT NEITHER AS INDIVIDUAL PARTIES NOR IN COALITION HAS POLITICAL OPPOSITION MADE VERY STRENUOUS EFFORT TO PRESENT ALIGNED CANDIDATES. RATHER, THEY ARE ADOPTING A FEW CANDIDATES AS THEIR OWN PREFERENCE FROM THE PLETHORA NATIONALLY AVAILABLE.

4. IN ATHENS, GEORGE PLYTAS, RUNNING ON A NON-PARTISAN "NATIONAL UNITY" TICKET, CONTINUES TO WAGE THE MORE AGGRESSIVE CAMPAIGN. HE HAS NOT BEEN ENDORSED BY THE NEW DEMOCRACY BUT EVERYONE CONSIDERS HIM THE CANDIDATE OF THE RIGHT. HE HAS A NUMBER OF CENTRISTS AND LEFTISTS ON HIS TICKET, HOWEVER. HIS MAIN OPPOSITION COMES FROM THE "DEMOCRATIC COOPERATION" TICKET HEADED BY JOHN PAPATHEODOROU, THE PRESENT CHAIRMAN OF MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF ATHENS. HIS TICKET IS ENDORSED BY BOTH KKE'S, EDA, PASOK AND INDIVIDUAL LEADERS, MOSTLY NEW FORCE LIBERALS, OF THE CU/NF. IN RECENT TALK WITH EMBOFF, PAPATHEODOROU ADMITTED HE HAD AT BEST A 50/50 CHANCE TO BEAT PLYTAS. HIS LIMITED OPTIMISM BASED ON HOPE THAT MOMENTUM WOULD GROW IN FEW LAST DAYS. THROUGH COMBINATION OF HIS LONG CIVIC REPUTATION PLUS PLYTAS' ROYALIST REPUTATION HE HOPES TO FIRM UP OLDER ATHENIAN VOTE, WHILE RELYING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ON HIS LEFTIST PARTISAN SUPPORT TO BRING OUT THE YOUGH VOTE. THERE IS A THIRD CANDIDATE, ADONIS KIZIKIS, WHO PRIMARILY HAS INDEPENDENT LEFTIST SUPPORT, AND SOME MINOR CANDIDATES.

5. EMBOFF IN VISIT TO MOST POPULOUS OF CYCLADES ISLANDS, SIROS, AND LARGEST ONE, NAXOS, OVER WEEKEND FOUND CONSIDERABLE HANDBILLING, SHOUTING, AND CAFE

KIBBITZING OVER LOCAL CANDIDATES. NONE OF IT  
SEEMED RELATED TO NATIONAL POLITICS NOR EVEN  
PARTICULARLY TO ISSUES. LEVERAGE AND COALITION IN  
THESE INSTANCES WAS BASED ON THE TRADITIONAL  
"GAMBROS" OR GODFATHER ASSOCIATIONS OF SMALL  
TOWN SOCIETY. IN THESE VILLAGES, NONE OF THE CANDIDATES  
HAD HELD MUNICIPAL OFFICE DURING THE JUNTA, AND WE  
BELIEVE THIS IS RATHER TYPICAL OVER THE COUNTRYSIDE WITH  
JUNTA ERA LOCAL LEADERS HAVING DECIDED TO WAIT THIS  
ROUND OUT.  
KUBISCH

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